

**Results Summary for the  
Community Questionnaire On City Hall East,  
the "MTA Block" and the "Art Exchange" Block  
in the Downtown (Long Beach Boulevard & Broadway area)**

*(Selected quotes from comments are in italics.)*

The Community Questionnaire was developed by the Selection Committee to solicit input from the community in regards to the proposed development of three sites at Long Beach Boulevard and Broadway. Considerable effort was expended to distribute the questionnaire throughout the Downtown area; it was distributed at public meeting on January 30, 2006, and was also made available on the City website. The availability of the questionnaire appeared in several newspaper articles, and copies were distributed to those homeowner's associations, local civic organizations and individuals who requested them. Results were tabulated with totals and averages calculated as appropriate. Thirty-three questionnaires were received after the deadline of February 10, 2006. These questionnaires were included in the final results. A significant portion of these late results were from Spanish speaking affordable housing advocates. Staff felt it was important to include these responses, despite being received after the deadline in order to understand the breadth of issues that were of concern to all respondents.

Listed below is a review of all responses received, separately by topic. Each topic summary is followed by representative quotes from the questionnaires in italics. Copies of the written comments from all respondents are also included at the end of this document.

**Land Use:**

Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated it was essential that future development promote a pedestrian-friendly and interesting environment. Similarly, there was strong support for the area to become a transportation hub with associated services and resources such as entertainment, shopping, restaurants, and public parking. The respondents strongly felt that any future development should relate to the East Village Arts neighborhood. There was also strong support (though to a lesser extent) that the development relate to the Downtown, Pine Avenue and Ocean Boulevard as well.

*Sample Comments:*

*"I'm excited about Art Exchange and the possibility of high-end retail in the downtown area."*

*"I believe that the 'Art Exchange' block should be a separate development opportunity than the City Hall East and MTA blocks. Since the Art Exchange block faces the East Village it should be no more than 4 stories high. Even though the City Hall East site is in the East Village it is more tied to Downtown."*

**Height/Density:**

Approximately 90% of the total respondents indicated that they believed the Downtown should be an active pedestrian urban environment with 81% of the total respondents responding that they understood the necessity of higher density and high rise residential

buildings in creating that active urban environment. Additionally, when asked if they would prefer most of the development at four stories or less with little retail or restaurant uses, over 69% disagreed. There was a preference for high rises to be distinctive in design, as opposed to blending in with surrounding buildings, and a strong preference for development that created a dense urban downtown versus a lower density area that related to the outlying area.

*Sample Comments:*

*"I very much like the high-rise proposals. These very dense developments belong here. It is very important for a strong link between these properties, the Blue Line and the Convention Center be established."*

*"I attended the meeting & thought format was good. I am (a) current longtime Downtown resident. (I) was very excited to see so many people interested (the) in future of Downtown. Developers were very helpful with my questions. High rises and density will make Long Beach better for residents and business."*

*"Hated the 20 story and up concepts. Appreciated that the meeting was well publicized and held in the evening so we could come without leaving work."*

*"The proposals were all very exciting. High-rise and pedestrian = world-class city."*

**Historic Resources:**

City Hall East Building – When asked how important it is to preserve City Hall East as a potential historic building regardless of the cost, there was a preference in support of this notion (63% indicating the idea was essential, important or nice to have, while 36% felt it was not important or had no opinion). The single largest response to this inquiry was “not important” with 57 responses, followed by “essential” with 43 responses, “nice to have” with 36 responses and “important” with 27 responses. Additionally, 53% of the respondents indicated they would support demolition of the City Hall East building if a more unified project would result for the entire block.

Acres of Books Building – Similar to the City Hall East Building responses, there was a preference for preserving the Acres of Books Building (69% indicating the idea was essential, important or nice to have, while 31% felt it was not important or had no opinion). The single largest response to this inquiry was “essential” with 49 responses, followed by “not important” with 47 responses, “nice to have” with 39 responses and “important” with 27 responses. There was support (60%) for restoration of the façade only, if the adaptive reuse of the entire building was found to be extraordinarily costly, or if a more unified project would result for the entire block.

American Hotel Building – There was not majority support for preserving the American Hotel as a historic resource in its entirety. 54% of the respondents gave either a negative response or had no opinion for preserving the American Hotel, although 62% did support restoration of the façade only.

### *Sample Comments:*

*“Acres of Books building is not essential, but the business is, façade is important. I liked the ones that preserved the eclectic nature of old Long Beach and saved existing business (i.e. Acres of Books).”*

*“Like adaptive reuse of SCE Building [City Hall East Building]. Regarding historic structures, it should be possible to look at removing them with mitigation if for a greater good. Yes, they're historic, but not our very best. Best solutions come from looking at all the possibilities.”*

*“American Hotel looks like trash, why keep it? Saving façade ok, but that's it. Visitors come to Acres of Books for the books and people watching, not the crappy building.”*

*“Saving the façades on our historic buildings is not enough. Using more of the buildings will create a sense of place, a mystery, a desire to explore. Disneyland and movie studios have façades. This is a city rich in history...we should capitalize on that. Thanks, however, for offering a chance for public input.”*

### **Public Parking:**

82% of the respondents indicated that additional parking (beyond that required for commercial uses) should be provided given the public transportation options in the area. Additionally, parking ranked number two in importance in the Public Oriented Amenities section of the Questionnaire as an amenity respondents would like to see Downtown.

### *Sample Comments:*

*“Convenient and inexpensive parking is the most important part of a development proposal.”*

*“Would like to see the parking problem fixed. Paying for parking keeps people away from Downtown.”*

### **Arts and Culture Programs:**

There was overwhelming support for the creation of an Art Exchange project on the proposed “Art Exchange Block” (81% of total respondents supported an Art Exchange project, 60% of total respondents indicated the project was essential or important). This support remained strong even when public funding was required for the project (71% of total respondents supported an Art Exchange requiring public funds, 54% of total respondents indicated it was essential or important). However, parking ranked higher than arts and culture programs in the Public Oriented Amenities section of the questionnaire.

### *Sample Comments:*

*“I’m looking forward to the change for the better, new Art Exchange and high-end retail.”*

*“I’m interested in the high-end retail and very unique art exchange.”*

### **Use of Public Subsidies:**

When asked to rate the importance of using public funds to assist in the redevelopment of these blocks, 81% of total respondents indicated this was essential, important or nice to have (60% of total respondents indicated essential or important).

Respondents were asked to rank the relative importance (from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important, and 5 being the least important) of using public subsidies for the following based on using either General Fund or Redevelopment Agency (RDA) Fund dollars. The average rank for each, using either General Fund or Redevelopment Agency Funds, is given below

	General Fund		RDA Funds	
	Rank	Avg.	Rank	Avg.
Art Exchange component	2	2.64	2	2.45
Historic preservation of buildings or facades	3	2.89	3	2.48
Public parking	1	2.38	1	2.32
Affordable housing	4	3.18	5	3.07
Ground floor retail/dining	5	3.28	4	3.00

There was some level of support for each activity under both funding sources. While there was not considerably more support for one aspect over another, public parking and an Art Exchange component seemed to come out as somewhat more preferred activities for public subsidies.

#### *Sample Comment:*

*"I like the idea that general funding and redevelopment agency funds are negotiating together on what to do with our Downtown district. I strongly support Long Beach's Downtown facelift."*

### **Public Oriented Amenities:**

Respondents were asked to assign a number of importance to public oriented amenities they would like to see in this neighborhood (1 being the most important, and 5 being the least important). Averages were calculated for each below:

	Average	Rank
Other (please describe) *	1.21	1
More public parking	2.11	2
Art facilities	2.14	3
Museums or art galleries	2.30	4
Specialty market/ grocery store	2.36	5
Public Open Space (pocket park)	2.40	6
Neighborhood serving retail (dry cleaners, news stands etc.)	2.41	7
Restaurants	2.51	8
Entertainment uses	2.64	9
High end retail	2.79	10

- \* In addition to a list of amenities, respondents were asked to please describe any other amenities they would like considered. There were 22 responses to the “other” category including; affordable housing, public safety/crime, extra parking, trees, department store, used book store, small unique specialty stores, owner occupied condos, landscape/fountains/public art/lighting, Acres of Books, international market and “sports of all kinds for parents and children”.

### **Respondents:**

Total Number of Respondents		179
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Respondents may have checked more than one of the following:

I am a resident of Long Beach		137
I am a resident of the Downtown Area		73
Downtown Business Owner		38

### **Survey Evaluation:**

Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful	No opinion
71	53	5	1

### **Comments on Meeting Format:**

*“Liked the format of the meeting.”*

*“I attended the meeting & thought format was good. I am current longtime Downtown resident. Was very excited to see so many people interested in future of Downtown. Developers were very helpful with my questions.”*

*“Well Presented. I liked the format.”*

*“Excellent job. It was great to hear and talk with "City" people. The developers were very helpful.”*